



Title:	Brighton & Hove Fairness Commission
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Purpose/Key Messages:	To inform Brighton & Hove Connected of the upcoming Fairness Commission
Significance to BHC and Delivering SCS outcomes:	The Commission is significant for BHC and relates directly to the delivery of the vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy
What is BHC being asked to do?	At this stage BHC is asked to engage and respond to requests from the Fairness Commission as they arise.
Next steps and report back mechanism:	BHC will be continually involved in the delivery of the Commission and will also receive and assist in implementing its recommendations.

**Brighton & Hove Fairness Commission
Summary Description based on Terms of Reference**

Why have a Fairness Commission?

Brighton & Hove is regarded by many as one of the thriving cities of the UK, booming socially, culturally and economically. It is a well-deserved reputation built on its unique natural landscape, its world class heritage and the spirit of its citizens over generations.

However, for many, the reality of life in Brighton & Hove is a struggle. A struggle to afford to live where housing and living costs are high but jobs are predominantly low paid. Where a lack of skills and poor physical or mental health prevent people from entering the labour market.

As the city's fortunes grow, more people will be attracted here. At the same time less money will be available for public services and to individuals, in the form of welfare. If we don't respond collectively the needs of a changing population may not be met and we risk more people, especially vulnerable people, being left further behind.

Perceptions of unfairness are also important because they can fuel tensions, distrust and conflict, even if the perception is not an accurate reflection of real inequalities.

This is why a Brighton & Hove Fairness Commission will be formed, to ensure that everyone, no matter where they live in the city, has a share in its economic success, and that everyone has the opportunity to lead healthy and productive lives in financial security and in cohesive communities.

Brighton & Hove City Council will work with its many partners to use the findings of the commission to create effective and sustainable public services, better positioned alongside communities to work with them for their own health and wellbeing and that of the city as a whole.

What will the commission do?

The commission will be an independent body tasked by Brighton & Hove City Council. It will work to reach conclusions about how the council, public services and the city should better work together to improve life for citizens.

These are to:

- Examine existing data and analysis to map poverty and inequality in Brighton & Hove
- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing council strategies, with partners, to deal with poverty and inequality
- Engage with stakeholders outside of the council and citizens to understand peoples experiences and priorities
- Examine how the council, with partners, can make significant, tangible improvements to reducing poverty and inequality
- Make specific and practical recommendations based on the findings of this process
- Produce ways of checking and measuring the impact of public services to address poverty and inequality
- Charge the council, with partners through Brighton & Hove Connected, to act on the recommendations of the commission in service delivery and budget setting

Who will be on the commission?

The commission will have up to 12 members including a Chair and a Deputy Chair. The Chair will be an independent person who will provide strong leadership around the agenda and set the strategic direction. The Chair of the council's Neighbourhoods, Communities & Equalities Committee will sit as an observer on the commission, as will an observer from each political group.

Professional specialisms of members will include (but are not restricted to) child poverty, the community & voluntary sector, community safety and cohesion, early years' provision, employment and skills, financial inclusion, health inequality, housing affordability, homelessness and transport.

What will the role of members be?

All members will be asked to fully participate in all of the commission meetings and activities, which include:

- Shaping the detailed aims and work programme of the commission
- Creating, promoting and participating in inclusive engagement activities
- Listening to and representing the views of people who experience inequality and poverty
- Reviewing and constructively debating the evidence and views presented to the commission
- Identifying practical ways to make Brighton & Hove a fairer place, working collaboratively across different sectors to reduce inequality
- Considering ways to foster greater cohesion in communities and greater trust and collaboration between citizens and public sector organisations
- Shaping, agreeing and publicising the findings and the recommendations of the commission
- Acting as 'fairness champions', responsible for taking the recommendations back to their own organisations and using spheres of influence to ensure implementation

In addition, the Chair will preside over proceedings at commission meetings and supervise progress in between meetings on a planned and ad hoc basis.

A Deputy Chair will be agreed by the commission to chair proceedings in the event that the Chair is unavailable.

How will the commission conduct its work?

The three fundamental governing principles of the commission will be independent enquiry, engaging and including people, and evidence of what works:

Independent enquiry

Members of the commission will be selected on the basis that they operate outside of the council but with an understanding of the services provided by the council and other public services. Members are asked to act and contribute objectively in the interests of the city and citizens, bringing fresh insight into the causes and impacts of inequality.

The commission will also invite a range of expert witnesses from across sectors and communities within the city, and potentially from elsewhere, in order to shape the direction of its work and inform the final recommendations.

Engaging and including people

The commission will seek to engage with and include a wide and reflective sample of the city's population. It is vital that personal experience, as well as

more formal evidence, becomes part of the understanding of what will make the city fairer.

The commission will make sure people can engage in its work in ways that they wish to and feel safe to do so, be it in person, through social media or anonymously. Public meetings will be accessible.

The commission will make particular effort to reach out to people with multiple needs who often find it hard to make their voices heard, and communities encouraged to instigate their own discussions to feed back.

As the commission progresses its work will be communicated openly, which will generate greater understanding of its aims and opportunities to feed into its findings.

Engagement Programme

A 'Call for Evidence' will be launched on 10th September with the aim of engaging as many residents, community & voluntary sector groups, service providers and businesses in the process and encouraging everyone to provide evidence and offer ideas for making Brighton & Hove a fairer and more equal place to live and work. Through this 'Call for Evidence' residents will be offered a number of ways for submitting their evidence and ideas including social media, email, the council's form page on the website and via events to be held in community venues across the city.

Community groups will be encouraged and supported to run their own workshops, focus groups or discussion groups and to feed their experiences and solutions back to the Commission.

Evidence of what works

The commission is asked not only to identify the issues which cause and are caused by inequality and poverty, but to make recommendations which are built on what has worked elsewhere. This might be actions delivered through the work of other fairness commissions or other initiatives.

The findings of the commission must meaningfully help and shape the transformation of services and spending plans for the council, along with the long term sustainability of public services as a whole for the city.

What will the commission look at?

To make this process manageable within the set timeframe, given the potential breadth of the subject, the commission will need to theme its work and focus on particular areas for enquiry. Potential themes will include employment and skills, financial inclusion, housing, transport, health and wellbeing.

The commission will focus on areas where there is the greatest potential for the council, with partners, to influence the best and fairest outcomes for

citizens. This will be through the use of local powers and resources or by using our voice regionally and nationally, for example through the Greater Brighton platform.

The final work programme for the commission will be determined by its members.

Role of Brighton and Hove Connected Members

Members of the Partnership may be asked to play an on-going role throughout the process and may, during the evidence gathering period, be asked by the Commissioners to:

- Provide them with data, data analysis, strategies, plans and other information that is relevant to their lines of enquiry;
- Attend meetings of the Commission to give evidence as expert witnesses;
- (Frontline Workers) Attend other events to provide evidence and ideas to Commissioners.
- Act as champions of the Fairness Commission;
- Raise awareness of the Fairness Commission in their respective organisations and disseminate information on the public meetings and other events to be held across the city.

The Partnership will receive the Commission's recommendations and will have the opportunity to respond to the recommendations.

How much will the commission cost?

The work of the commission will bear no extra cost to the public purse. Members of the commission will give their time within their professional remit or voluntarily. They will be reimbursed for any basic costs associated with travel or subsistence associated with the commission, but this will only be where necessary. Resources from the council to support the work of the commission will be met within existing capacity and resources.

How long will the commission take?

Final agreement for the establishment of the commission and its terms of reference was approved at Policy & Resources Committee on 11 June and also by the Neighbourhoods, Communities and Equalities Committee on 20 July 2015. The commission will meet, in public, on a limited number of occasions and report its findings and recommendations to council by May 2016. The final report and recommendations are expected to be published in June 2016.

The breadth of issues the commission agrees to look at will determine how many times the commission comes together and frequency of any other events or evidence gathering sessions they may require.

Who will monitor delivery of the commission's recommendations?

Once the commission reports its findings, relevant committees of the council will consider them with a view to adopting the proposals and agreeing reporting mechanisms to monitor progress against all of the recommendations.

Launch

The Fairness Commission will be launched on 10th September and details of its work, and the Commissioners, will be available on a web link from the city council's website. www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/fairness-commission

Through the public engagement programme, the Commission will issue a 'Call for Evidence' inviting evidence and ideas from citizens, groups, businesses and the Third Sector.

Timetable

Month	Key Activity
September	Recruitment to the Commission finalised
10 September	Fairness Commission launched
September – Feb 2016	'Call for Evidence' – engagement programme implemented
24 September	Initial meeting of Fairness Commission held
14 October	Commission finalises key issues and lines of enquiry
November – March 2016	Series of 5 public meetings held to hear evidence from expert & community witnesses
April – May 2016	Commission finalises its recommendations
May – June 2016	Draft report for approval by the Commission
May 2016	Recommendations shared with council and partners
June 2016	Final Report Published on council website